

all of a sudden start talking about sending American troops into East Timor.

I think by beginning to start bandying that around, all of a sudden you are going to start seeing people depend on American troops. I don't think we have to start talking about American troops in East Timor. I think it would be harmful if we did that because of the vast commitment we have in the Balkans right now as well as the DMZ in Korea, as well as in Japan, as well as in Europe, and other places in the world.

No one would ever walk away from the responsibility that America must shoulder as a superpower. But Australia has stepped up to the line to try to help bring an end to the chaos that I hope is temporarily erupting in East Timor. I think we should help them do that by offering logistical support but letting people volunteer.

This is a time when we can look at the areas of the world that have regional conflicts, and we can let the sophisticated countries that have quality military operations be the main part of a force in those areas.

In fact, it appears that Australia, New Zealand, and many others are volunteering to take this policekeeping mission. I think it would be wise for us to let them do that. Let them take that responsibility and offer our logistical help if they need it. But don't start bandying about the possibility of U.S. troops going in on the ground when our troops are stretched so thin—when we have had the worst recruiting year and the worst retention year since the early 1970s because our troops are in mission fatigue. They are not able to stay in top training because they are stretched so thin.

I hope the President will take this opportunity to set a U.S. policy and to work with our allies to have a division of responsibility that is fair.

If we do that, then America will be able to do what only it can uniquely do, and that is the air power that we have shown that we have in the last 6 months. Let us keep our role to responding where only we are able to keep the peace—in the Middle East, in Korea, in Japan, and in parts of Europe. Let's work with our allies for a fair responsibility sharing that will set a precedent so that we will all have the staying power to provide the critical needs in regions as they occur.

I hope President Clinton will take this opportunity to be a leader and to represent the United States and our national security issues and our national security stability. If he will do that, I think you will begin to see a foreign policy that will evolve with all of our allies sharing and keeping all of us strong by not overburdening any one of us to the detriment of all.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative assistant proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BROWNBACK. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. HUTCHISON). Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. BROWNBACK. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

JUVENILE JUSTICE CONFERENCE

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, so far, we have had one meeting of a conference to resolve differences in the Senate and House passed juvenile justice bills. I commented at that conference meeting, on August 5, 1999, about how unfortunate it was that the leadership in the Congress delayed action on the conference all summer. In fact, the conference met less than 24 hours before the Congress adjourned for its long August recess.

Unfortunately, we did not conclude our work but left this conference and important work on the juvenile justice legislation to languish for the last five weeks of the summer.

Due to the delays in convening this conference and then its abrupt adjournment before completing its work, we knew before our August recess that the programs to enhance school safety and protect our children and families called for in this legislation would not be in place before school began.

The fact that American children are starting school without Congress finishing its work on this legislation is wrong.

We had to overcome technical obstacles and threatened filibusters to begin the juvenile justice conference. It is no secret that there are those in both bodies who would prefer no action and no conference to moving forward on the issues of juvenile violence and crime. Now that we have convened this conference, we should waste no more time to get down to business and finish our work promptly.

We have seen the kind of swift conference action the Congress is capable of doing with the Y2K law that provides special legal protections to businesses. That Y2K bill was passed by the Senate almost a month after the HATCH-LEAHY juvenile justice bill, on June 16th, but was sent to conference, worked out, and sent to the President's desk within two short weeks. That bill is already law. The example set by the Y2K legislation shows that if we have

the will, there is a way to get legislation done and done quickly.

Those of us serving on the conference and many who are not on the conference have worked on versions of this legislation for several years now. We spent two weeks on the Senate floor in May considering almost 50 amendments to S. 254, the Senate juvenile justice bill, and making many improvements to the underlying bill. We worked hard in the Senate for a strong bipartisan juvenile justice bill, and we should take this opportunity to cut through our remaining partisan differences to make a difference in the lives of our children and families.

I appreciate that one of the most contentious issues in this conference is guns, even though sensible gun control proposals are just a small part of the comprehensive legislation we are considering. The question that the majority in Congress must answer is what are they willing to do to protect children from gun violence?

A report released two months ago on juvenile violence by the Justice Department concludes that, "data . . . indicate that guns play a major role in juvenile violence." We need to do more to keep guns out of the hands of children who do not know how to use them or plan to use them to hurt others.

Law enforcement officers in this country need help in keeping guns out of the hands of people who should not have them. I am not talking about people who use guns for hunting or for sport, but about criminals and unsupervised children. An editorial that appeared today in the Rutland Daily Herald summed up the dilemma in this juvenile justice conference for the majority:

Republicans in Congress have tried to follow the line of the National Rifle Association. It will be interesting to see if they can hold that line when the Nation's crime fighters let them know that fighting crime also means fighting guns.

Every parent, teacher and student in this country was concerned this summer about school violence over the last two years and worried about when the next shooting may occur. They only hope it does not happen at their school or involve their children. This is an unacceptable and intolerable situation.

We all recognize that there is no single cause and no single legislative solution that will cure the ill of youth violence in our schools or in our streets. But we have an opportunity before us to do our part. We should seize this opportunity to act on balanced, effective juvenile justice legislation, and measures to keep guns out of the hands of children and away from criminals. I hope we get to work soon and finish what we started in the juvenile justice conference. We are already tardy.

DR. PAUL VAN de WATER

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I would like to take a moment to talk